

REMARKS

In the most recent Office Action, which is the first in the Request for Continued Examination, the Examiner has indicated that claim 16 is allowed and that the subject matter of claims 4, 8, 9, 11 and 12 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicant thanks the Examiner for this indication of allowable subject matter, and herein endeavors to present the broadest allowable claims based upon the Examiner's conclusions.

Claim 4 ultimately depended from claim 1, having claim 2 as the only intervening claim. Thus, claim 1 has been amended to include the subject matter of claims 2 and 4, and should be in condition for allowance. Similarly, claim 11 ultimately depended from claim 1, with claims 5, 6 and 10 as intervening claims. All of these claims have now been combined in independent claim 11, and this claim should also be in condition for allowance.

Claim 12 depends from claim 11, and should also be allowable.

Claim 8 ultimately depended from claim 1, with claims 5, 6 and 7 intervening. As the subject matter of claim 7 has little bearing on the allowable subject matter of claim 8, and further due to the state of the prior art cited throughout the prosecution of this application, Applicant feels that the subject matter of claim 8 would be allowable without the intervening subject matter of claim 7. Thus, claim 5 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 1, 5, 6 and 8, and not claim 7, and it is believed that this claim will still be allowable. Applicant's attorney called the Examiner to discuss this issue, and the Examiner kindly indicated that he would consider this point and contact Applicant's attorney if he feels it is necessary to enter an Examiner's amendment to include the subject matter of claim 7 in what is now claim 5. Applicant thanks the Examiner for his attention to this issue, and looks forward to concluding the prosecution of the present application.

In light of the foregoing, it is believed that all pending claims are in condition for allowance, and the same is earnestly solicited. Should the Examiner wish to discuss any of the foregoing in greater detail, the undersigned attorney would welcome a telephone call.

Although claims 5 and 11 are now independent claims, the cancellation of claims 18 and 19 has offset any necessary additional fees. Nonetheless, in the event that a fee required for the filing of this document is missing or insufficient, the undersigned attorney hereby authorizes the Commissioner to charge payment of any fees associated with this communication or to credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 18-0987.

Respectfully submitted,



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